

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-36 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3 are amended and claim 4 is canceled. Claims 12-35 have been withdrawn by the Examiner.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's acknowledgement of allowable subject matter in claims 4-6 and the allowance of claim 36.

II. Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 4-6 and 7-11 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, because independent claims 1 and 2 are characterized as indefinite. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 2 have been amended for clarity. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of independent claims 1 and 2 and dependent claims 5-11 be withdrawn.

III. Claim Objection

Claim 4 is objected to because it purportedly contains the term "elements." Applicants cannot identify where the term "elements" is found in claim 4 or in any other non-withdrawn claim. As this objection appears to be erroneous, it is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

IV. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-3 and 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Buchter (U.S. Patent No. 6,536,957); and claims 1 and 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Pommer et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030201462). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

By this Amendment, the allowable subject matter of claim 4 has been incorporated into independent claims 1-3. Accordingly, the rejections based on Buchter and Pommer are moot.

V. Amendment After Final Rejection

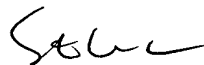
Entry of the aforementioned amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration because the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; and (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the Final Rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: November 23, 2005

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